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ABSTRACT

This study explores the relationships between the percentage of successful property tax issues and community and school characteristics in rural school districts in Ohio. Data were obtained for 74 rural school districts between 1984 and 1988; sources were government statistics and a questionnaire survey of school principals. The dependent variable in the study was the percentage of successful property tax issues. Moderate positive relationships were found between the dependent variable and: (1) average community income; and (2) the percentage of community members with 12 or more years of formal education. Twenty-two independent variables were entered into a step-wise multiple regression equation to determine the best predictors of election success. The following 5 variables accounted for 49 percent of the variance in predicting election success: (1) percentage of Aid to Dependent Children students; (2) percentage of bond issues; (3) percentage of continuous issues, providing operational funding for an indefinite period of time; (4) percentage of games won in boys varsity basketball; and (5) percentage of special elections, as opposed to primary or general elections. All variables were negatively related to election success. The report recommends that state policy makers consider measures to improve financial support to rural schools. It also recommends that rural administrators consider voter behavior prior to placing issues on the ballot, improve career guidance services, and advocate greater state and federal involvement in financing capital facilities. (KS)

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COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS AND VOTER BEHAVIOR IN OHIO RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPERTY TAX ELECTIONS

By

Matt Baker and J. David McCracken

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Community and School Characteristics and Voter Behavior in Ohio Rural School District Property Tax Elections

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A trend in public school finance is that financial support from the federal government has decreased (Newman and Bull, 1986) and a greater financial burden is having to be assumed at both the state and local levels. Local support is determined primarily through property tax issues which must be approved by local voters.

Anne Campbell (1985), former Nebraska Commissioner of Education, suggested that although there is a need for increased state and federal understanding of the unique problems associated with rural education, rural community members must be willing to invest in the future of their own children. Terrel H. Bell (1988) identified a major problem in public school finance when he disclosed that those who operate capital-intense businesses (such as farmers) bear an excessive burden in financing schools.

Piele and Hall (1973), indicated that student socioeconomic characteristics, average community income, and community educational attainment are indicators of socioeconomic status. These same researchers disclosed that individuals who have benefitted most from education were more likely to support educational financial issues. Community members of higher socioeconomic status were found to be predisposed to support school related property tax issues.

Important school factors influencing voter behavior include student advanced educational and occupational patterns after completing high school and athletic program history. Cutlip and Center (1964) contended that student success is the most important factor in school-community relations.

In 1960, Carter and Sutthoff found that informed school observers perceived student athletics as an important aspect of public schools. Relatedly, Nunnery and Kimbrough (1971) conducted a study for the purpose of determining voter support for school referendums and found that attempts to improve extracurricular programs drew significant voter support. Gjelten and Nachtigal (1979) suggested that student participation in extracurricular activities in rural schools was an integral part of the complete school program. These same researchers reported that the role of athletic competition increased linkages between community and schools, as a result of limited opportunities for public entertainment in rural areas.

There has been little voter behavior research conducted on rural school districts in Ohio. What community and school characteristics influence Ohio rural community members? In an effort to seek the answer to this question, a study was conducted in Ohio with the major purpose of exploring relationships between the percentage of successful property tax issues and community and school characteristics. The following specific objectives guided the study:

(1) Describe rural school districts in Ohio in terms of: (a) the percentage of successful property tax issues, (b) the percentage of Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) students, (c) average household income, (d) community educational attainment, (e) financial issue history, (f) advanced educational and occupational patterns of former rural students, and (g) high school athletic history.
(2) Explore relationships between the percentage of successful property tax issues and: (a) the percentage of ADC students, (b) average community income, (c) community educational attainment, (d) financial issue history, (e) advanced educational and occupational patterns of former rural students, and (f) high school athletic history.
(3) Determine the characteristics which best predict election success in rural school district property tax elections.

Methods

The study was descriptive and correlational in nature. The population consisted of all rural school districts in Ohio (N=74). Rural school districts were defined as: (1) being located outside of a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area, (2) having a secondary enrollment of 500 students or less, and (3) being located in a county with a total population under 40,000. Data were

Table 1. Percentage of Successful Financial Issues

Percent of Successful Issues	n	Percent
0- 9	5	6.7
10- 19	5	6.7
20- 29	3	4.1
30- 39	5	6.7
40- 49	4	5.5
50- 59	9	12.2
60- 69	10	13.5
70- 79	9	12.2
80- 89	10	13.5
90-100	14	18.9
Total	74	100.0

Mean=61.2; SD=30.0

Table 2. Percentage of ADC Students

Percent of Students	n	Percent of Districts
0- 9	52	70.2
10- 19	15	20.3
20- 29	6	8.1
30- 39	1	1.4
Total	74	100.0

Mean=8.62, SD=7.1

Table 3. Average Household Income Per District

Dollar Income	n	Percent
$19,999 or less	25	33.7
$20,000-$20,999	20	27.0
$21,000-$21,999	11	14.9
$22,000-$22,999	12	16.2
$23,000-$23,999	4	5.4
$24,000-$24,999	1	1.4
$25,000-$25,999	0	0.0
$26,000-$26,999	1	1.4
Total	74	100.0

Mean=20,532.0, SD=1,932.8

collected from a variety of sources including: (1) the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), (2) the U. S. Census Bureau, and (3) an investigator-designed high school athletic history questionnaire administered to rural high school principals. Data were obtained for five school years between 1984 and 1988, except for U.S. Census data on community educational attainment.

Content and face validity of the instrument were established by a panel of experts and a field test conducted in eight small districts not included in the population of the study. In an attempt to determine the accuracy of information provided on the questionnaire, a number of questions were included corresponding to information available from the ODE. Very strong associations (Davis, 1971) were found between respondent answers and information from ODE.

A complete data set was obtained for all variables except high school athletic history. Twenty rural principals refused to complete and return the questionnaire. Nonresponse error was controlled by comparing respondents to nonrespondents on the dependent variable (percentage of successful property tax elections). A t-test between the two groups indicated no significant difference existed ($t=.21$, $p=.83$).

Results

The dependent variable in the study was the percentage of successful property tax issues. Data were weighted for analysis purposes. A two-thirds weight was assigned to successful issues between 1984 and 1988. A one-third weight was assigned to successful issues between 1973 and 1983. In seven districts, success of issues between 1973 and 1983 were used exclusively as a measure of the dependent variable. Figures contained in Table 1 show that rural community members supported 61.2 percent of all issues.

The Ohio Department of Human Services reports to school districts the names of those families who receive assistance from the federal government based upon family income. Students belonging to such families are categorized as ADC students. Based upon current law, districts which have higher percentages of ADC students receive additional state revenue by way of the foundation program. Table 2 reveals that of total rural school enrollment, 8.6 percent were ADC students. Based upon income tax returns, the average household income per rural district was $20,532 (Table 3). There was a difference of $11,435 between the wealthiest district and poorest district, with the range between $14,621 and $26,056.

About 63 percent of rural community members attained at least 12 years of formal education (Table 4). Table 5 presents data pertaining to the type of election when various school financial issues were held. Approximately 41 percent (n=94) of the issues between 1984 and 1988 were conducted during primary elections, 49 percent (n=113) were conducted during general elections, and 10 percent (n=24) were conducted as special elections. Each Ohio rural district averaged 1.3 issues during primary elections, 1.5 issues during general elections, and 0.3 issues during special elections.

Emergency new and renewal issues were operational issues with a life of five or fewer years. After the passage of such issues, the board of education had the option of issuing anticipation notes for one-half of the revenue expected for the first year. This allowed for almost immediate financial relief of operational related expenses. Limited issues provided operational or capital funding for joint vocational schools.

Bond issues provided funding for long-term capital finance (such as for the construction of buildings), and permanent improvement issues provided funding for the maintenance or improvement of capital facilities. Continuous issues provided operational funding for an indefinite period of time.

An inspection of Tables 6 and 7 reveals information regarding the six types of financial issues conducted in rural Ohio districts. The following percentages of differing types of issues were discovered: (1) emergency new, 22.4 percent (n=51), (2) continuous, 15.4 percent (n=35), (3) limited, 11.5 percent (n=26), (4) bond, 18.5 percent (n=42), (5) permanent improvement, 26.0 percent (n=59), and (6) emergency renewal, 6.2 percent (n=14).

Almost one-third (33.6 percent) of former Ohio rural students immediately entered an occupation, about one-third (30.2 percent) entered a bachelor's degree program, and the final one-third (36.2 percent) either entered an associate's degree program, technical program, military service, or could not be accounted for by school administrators (Tables 8 and 9).

The average rural school district in Ohio won 30.2 percent of its boys varsity football games, 49.4 percent of its girls varsity basketball games, 48.9 percent of its boys varsity basketball games, and 49.7 percent of its boys varsity baseball games (Tables 10 and 11).

Exploration of Relationships Between the Percentage of Successful Property Tax Issues and Selected Community and School Characteristics

Table 12 reveals that negative moderate associations were discovered between the percentage of successful property tax issues and: (1) the percentage of ADC students (rho=−.49), (2) percentage of special elections (rho=−.31), (3) percentage of bond issues (rho=−.30), and (4) the percentage of students whose status was unknown after high school (rho=−.35). As each of these four independent variables increased, voter support for property tax issues decreased.

Positive moderate relationships were found between the dependent variable and: (1) average community income (rho=.32), and (2) the percentage of community members with 12 or more years of formal education (rho=.32). As community income and educational

Table 4. Percentages of Community Members with Twelve or More Years of Education

Percentage Range	n	Percent
40.0 - 49.9	3	4.1
50.0 - 59.9	13	17.6
60.0 - 69.9	52	70.1
70.0 - 79.9	5	6.8
80.0 - 89.9	1	1.4
Total	74	100.0

Mean=62.8, SD=6.4

Table 5. Type of Election

Election Frequency	Primary Dist. No.	Primary Election No.	Primary %	General Dist. No.	General Election No.	General %	Special Dist. No.	Special Election No.	Special %
0	16	0	21.6	13	0	17.6	54	0	73.0
1	32	32	43.2	29	29	39.2	16	16	21.6
2	17	34	23.0	18	36	24.3	4	8	5.4
3	8	24	10.8	10	30	13.5	0	0	0.0
4	1	4	1.4	2	8	2.7	0	0	0.0
5	0	0	0.0	2	10	2.7	0	0	0.0
Totals	74	94	100.0	74	113	100.0	74	24	100.0

Mean=1.3, SD=1.0; Mean=1.5, SD=1.2; Mean=0.3, SD=0.6

Table 6. Percentages of Emergency New, Continuous, and Limited Elections

Election Frequency	Primary Dist. No.	Primary Election No.	Primary %	General Dist. No.	General Election No.	General %	Special Dist. No.	Special Election No.	Special %
0	47	0	63.5	50	0	67.5	58	0	78.3
1	14	14	18.8	17	17	23.0	9	9	12.2
2	7	14	9.5	4	8	5.4	4	8	5.4
3	2	6	2.7	2	6	2.7	3	9	4.1
4	3	12	4.1	1	4	1.4	0	0	0.0
5	1	5	1.4	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0
Totals	74	51	100.0	74	35	100.0	74	26	100.0

Mean=0.7, SD=1.2; Mean=0.5, SD=0.8; Mean=0.4, SD=0.8

attainment increased, voter support for property tax issues also increased.

Prediction of Election Success

Twenty-two independent variables were entered into a step-wise multiple regression equation to determine the best predictors of election success (Table 13). The following five variables (listed in order of importance) accounted for about 53 percent of the variance in predicting election success: (1) percentage of ADC students, (2) percentage of bond issues, (3) percentage of continuous issues, (4) percentage of games won in boys varsity basketball, and (5) percentage of special elections. All variables were negatively related to election success.

Discussion of Findings

In this section, findings will be compared or contrasted with previous research. For most variables, comparative research was conducted in differing time periods and/or differing populations. Therefore, caution must be exhibited in drawing absolute conclusions.

Rural community members in Ohio supported 61.2 percent of all property tax issues. Although this variable was weighted, the success rate experienced in rural Ohio school districts is believed to be reflective of those rates which rural school districts in Ohio experience each year. Piele and Hall (1973) reported that past voting patterns were significant indicators of present voting patterns.

According to Carmen (1988), only 21.4 percent of all Ohio school related issues were successful during a general election conducted in 1988. It appears that rural residents are more supportive of their schools than Ohio residents as a whole.

Almost 9 percent of rural students between 1984 and 1988 were ADC students. According to the ODE for 1988 only, 15.85 percent of all school students in Ohio were ADC students. Rural school districts tend to have fewer ADC students than the statewide average.

The average personal income in rural Ohio districts was $20,532. The average personal income for all Ohio districts in 1988 was $25,518. Rural Ohio community members tend to have less personal income than the average Ohio resident.

In terms of educational attainment of community members, 63 percent of the rural residents had completed at least 12 years of formal education, compared with 64.6 percent of all Ohio residents. Rural Ohio community members are only slightly less educated than the average Ohio resident.

Of the 231 school district financial issues conducted between 1984 and 1988, 41 percent were conducted during general elections, 48.9 percent were conducted during primary elections, and 10.4 percent were conducted as special elections. Approximately 90 percent of the elections were conducted during primary and general elections. School districts are not responsible for financing elections when issues are conducted during primary and general elections.

Almost 45 percent of the financial elections were capital related (being either bond or permanent improvement). This might reflect a need for alternative capital finance options for Ohio rural school districts.

Student follow-up information provided by ODE revealed the following: (1) 33.6 percent immediately entered an occupation, (2) 30.2 percent entered a bachelor's degree program, (3) 15.7 percent entered an associate's degree program, (4) 3.9 percent entered a technical program, (5) 6.4 percent entered the military, and (6) 10.2 percent were accountable for by school officials.

Barcinas (1989) examined rural seniors in Ohio and reported that 47.2 percent expected to enter a bachelor's degree program, 5.1 percent expected to enroll in a community or junior college, and 29.7 percent expected to enter a technical degree program.

Based upon these two data sets, more rural students planned on entering a bachelor's degree program than

Table 7. Percentages of Bond, Capital Permanent Improvement, and Emergency Renewal Issues

	Bond			Capital Permanent Improvement			Emergency Renewal		
Election Frequency	Dist. No.	Election No.	%	Dist. No.	Election No.	%	Dist. No.	Election No.	%
0	47	0	63.4	38	0	51.3	63	0	85.1
1	17	15	23.0	21	21	28.3	8	8	10.8
2	4	8	5.4	11	22	14.9	3	6	4.1
3	4	10	5.4	3	9	4.1	0	0	0.0
4	1	4	1.4	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0
5	1	5	1.4	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0
6	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0
7	0	0	0.0	1	7	1.4	0	0	0.0
Totals	74	42	100.0	74	59	100.0	74	14	100.0

Mean=0.6, SD=1.1; Mean=0.8, SD=1.1; Mean=0.2, SD=0.5

actually enter such programs, fewer students planned on enrolling in a junior college than actually enter a junior college, and more students planned on entering a technical program than actually do enter such programs.

Barcinas also reported that 5.9 percent of Ohio rural high school seniors planned upon entering the military. The percentage of Ohio rural students planning to enter the military is reflective of the percentage who actually do enter the military.

A moderate negative relationship (rho=−.49) was discovered between the dependent variable and the percentage of ADC students. Boskoff and Zeigler (1964) and Minar (1966) disclosed that as student socioeconomic background increased,

Table 8. Advanced Educational Status of Rural Students

Percentage of Former Students	Associate Degree		Bachelor's Degree		Technical Degree	
	n	Percent	n	Percent	n	Percent
0.0	1	1.4	1	1.4	23	31.1
0.1 - 9.9	21	28.3	0	0.0	40	54.0
10.0 - 19.9	32	43.1	10	13.5	8	10.8
20.0 - 29.9	13	17.6	22	29.7	0	0.0
30.0 - 39.9	3	4.1	22	29.7	0	0.0
40.0 - 49.9	0	0.0	15	20.2	0	0.0
50.0 - 59.9	0	0.0	1	1.4	0	0.0
60.0 - 69.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
70.0 - 79.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
80.0 - 89.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
90.0 - 100.0	1	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Data Not Available	3	4.1	3	4.1	3	4.1
Totals	74	100.0	74	100.0	74	100.0

Mean=15.7 30.2 3.9
SD=12.6 10.2 4.3

Table 9. Occupational Status of Rural Students

Percentage of Former Students	Military		Employed		Unaccounted	
	n	Percent	n	Percent	n	Percent
0.0	5	6.8	1	1.4	19	25.7
0.1 - 9.9	53	71.5	0	0.0	21	28.3
10.0 - 19.9	12	16.2	8	10.8	20	27.0
20.0 - 29.9	1	1.4	18	24.3	7	9.5
30.0 - 39.9	0	0.0	24	32.3	2	2.7
40.0 - 49.9	0	0.0	12	16.2	2	2.7
50.0 - 59.9	0	0.0	7	9.5	0	0.0
60.0 - 69.9	0	0.0	1	1.4	0	0.0
70.0 - 79.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
80.0 - 89.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
90.0 - 100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Data Not Available	3	4.1	3	4.1	3	4.1
Totals	74	100.0	74	100.0	74	100.0

Mean=6.4 33.6 10.2
SD=4.0 12.3 10.9

community support for school financial issues also increased.

A moderate positive association (rho=.32) was found among the dependent variable and average community income. Previous researchers have also found that average community income significantly influences election success (Boskoff and Zeigler, 1964; Milstein and Jennings, 1970; Smith, 1968; and Davidson, 1967).

Community educational attainment was also found to be important in terms of voter support for school financial issues (rho=.32). As community educational attainment increased, so did voter support. This finding was supported by a number of other researchers (McKelvey, 1966; Tebbutt, 1968; Schoonhoven and Patterson, 1966; Wilson and Banfield, 1971).

School financial issues conducted as special elections tended to be less successful (rho=−.31). Voter turnout is typically lower in special elections than in primary or general elections. Piele (1983) indicated that a modification in voter behavior theory occurred in the 1970s and early 1980s. Prior to this time, there was a great deal of empirical evidence to support the theory that the lower the voter turnout, the greater the likelihood that a school financial issue would be supported (Carter and Sutthoff, 1960; Agger and Goldstein, 1971; Piele and Hall, 1973). Researchers began to observe that lower voter turnout did not necessarily insure a successful financial election (Rubinfeld and Thomas, 1980).

Bond issues (rho=−.30) received less voter support than other types of financial issues. This finding was not supported by other researchers (Minar, 1966; Carter and Savard, 1961) who found that capital related issues tended to receive significantly greater community support than operational issues.

Five variables were found to be meaningful in predicting voter support for successful property tax issues. The five variables were: (1) the percentage of ADC students, (2) the percentage of bond issues, (3) the percentage of continuous issues, (4) the percentage of games won in boys varsity basketball, and (5) the percentage of special elections. The five variables were negatively related to the dependent variable.

Prior research supports the logic that student socioeconomic background negatively influences community support for school financial

Table 10. Percentages of Games Won in Boys Varsity Football and Girls Varsity Basketball

	Boys Football		Girls Basketball	
Games Won	n	Percent	n	Percent
Did Not Participate	16	21.6	1	1.4
1.0 - 9.9	0	0.0	1	1.4
10.0 - 19.9	3	4.1	5	6.8
20.0 - 29.9	2	2.7	4	5.4
30.0 - 39.9	15	20.2	5	6.8
40.0 - 49.9	6	8.1	11	14.7
50.0 - 59.9	6	8.1	6	8.1
60.0 - 69.9	4	5.4	12	16.2
70.0 - 79.9	1	1.4	4	5.4
80.0 - 89.9	1	1.4	5	6.8
90.0 - 99.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
No Response	20	27.0	20	27.0
Totals	74	100.0	74	100.0

Mean=30.2 49.4 SD=24.2 22.1

Table 11. Percentages of Games Won in Boys Varsity Basketball and Boys Varsity Baseball

	Boys Basketball		Boys Baseball	
Games Won	n	Percent	n	Percent
Did Not Participate	1	1.4	1	1.4
1.0 - 9.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
10.0 - 19.9	2	2.7	2	2.7
20.0 - 29.9	4	5.4	5	6.8
30.0 - 39.9	4	5.4	12	16.2
40.0 - 49.9	13	17.6	13	17.5
50.0 - 59.9	18	24.2	13	17.5
60.0 - 69.9	7	9.5	6	8.1
70.0 - 79.9	4	5.4	1	1.4
80.0 - 89.9	1	1.4	1	1.4
90.0 - 99.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
No Response	20	27.0	20	27.0
Totals	74	100.0	74	100.0

Mean=48.9 49.7 SD=15.5 15.6

issues (Boskoff and Zeigler, 1964; Minar, 1966). There is also empirical evidence to indicate that as voter turnout decreases (as in the case of special elections) voter support also decreases (Rubinfeld and Thomas, 1980). Conventional wisdom reinforces the association between the dependent variable and the percentage of continuous issues. Certainly voters might be less supportive of tax increases which remain in effect for an indefinite period of time.

Explanations of why the percentage of games won in boys varsity basketball was meaningful in predicting election success might be limited to both community socioeconomic and administrative characteristics. Baker (1990) reported a moderate negative relationship between voter support and the percentage of students who entered an associate's degree program (rho=−.35). A moderate negative association was also found between voter support and cost per pupil (rho=−.40).

There appears to be little logic as to why the percentage of bond issues was found to be meaningful. Previous researchers have found just the opposite to be true (Minar, 1966; Carter and Savard, 1961). This independent variable may be carrying additional information which did not surface as a result of this study.

Figure 1 contains a model for predicting election success in rural Ohio school districts, based upon the stepwise analysis. Additional research is needed to support the chain of logic among a number of variables in the model.

Recommendations for the Improvement of Practice

The following recommendations are forwarded to state policy makers and rural school administrators.

State Policy Makers

(1) Approximately 39 percent of school financial issues were not supported by rural community members. State policy makers should give rural school board members the discretion to increase local property taxes for

Table 12. Associations Among the Percentage of Successful Property Tax Issues and Selected Community and School Characteristics (N=74)

	r[1]
Percentage of ADC students	−.49
Average personal income	.32
Percentage of community members with 12 or more years of formal education	.32
Percentage of primary elections	−.14
Percentage of general elections	−.04
Percentage of special elections	−.31
Percentage of emergency new issues	.05
Percentage of continuous issues	−.18
Percentage of limited issues	−.07
Percentage of bond issues	−.30
Percentage of capital permanent improvement issues	.04
Percentage of emergency renewal issues	.16
Percentage of students entering a bachelor's degree program	.20
Percentage of students entering an associates degree program	.14
Percentage of students entering a technical program	−.07
Percentage of students entering military service	−.09
Percentage of students immediately employed	.06
Percentage of students unaccounted	−.35
Percentage of games won in boys varsity football	.04
Percentage of games won in girls varsity basketball	−.11
Percentage of games won in boys varsity basketball	−.23
Percentage of games won in boys varsity baseball	.09

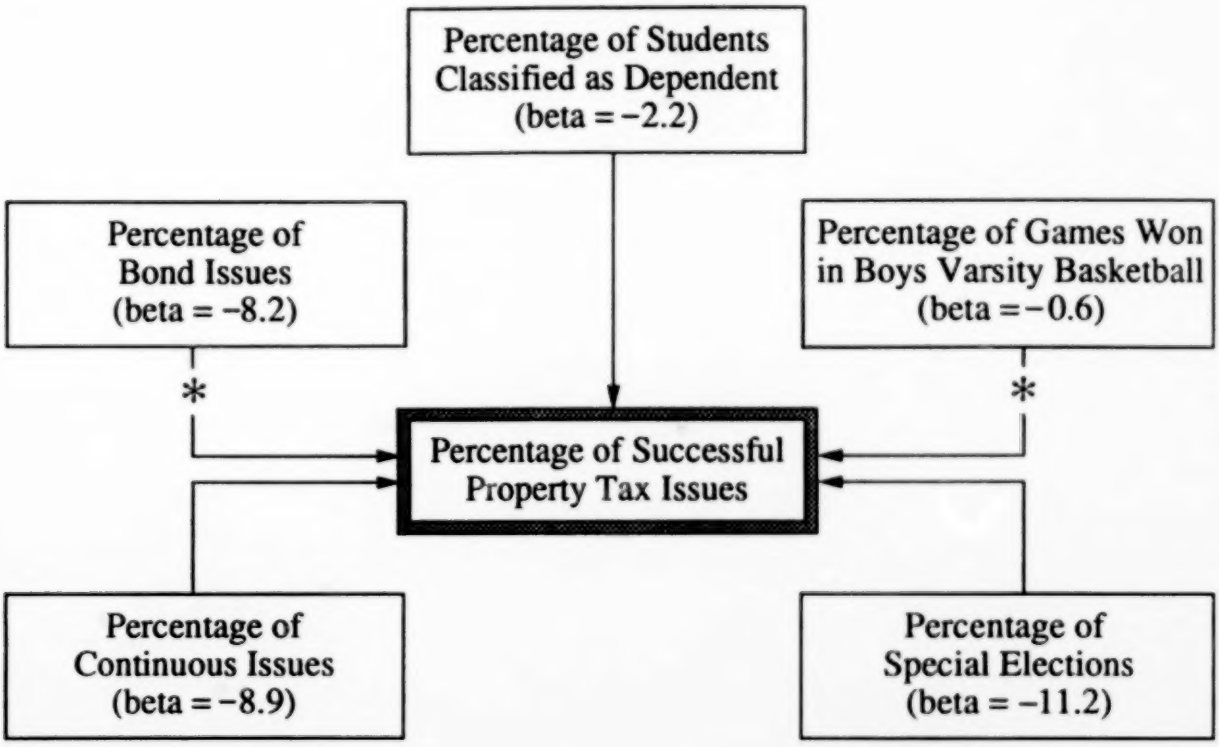
[1]Pearson Product Moment

Table 13. Regression of Successful School Finance Issues on Selected Independent Variables (N=74) (Stepwise Entry)

Variables	R2	R2change	b
Percentage of dependent students	.24	.24	−2.2
Percentage of bond issues	.34	.10	−8.2
Percentage of continuous issues	.42	.08	−8.9
Percentage of games won in boys varsity basketball	.48	.06	−0.6
Percentage of special elections	.53	.05	−11.2
Constant			123.1

Standard error=21.40
Adjusted R2=.49

Figure 1. Model for Predicting Success in Ohio Rural School District Property Tax Elections


Percentage of Students Classified as Dependent (beta = −2.2)
Percentage of Bond Issues (beta = −8.2)
Percentage of Games Won in Boys Varsity Basketball (beta = −0.6)
*
*
Percentage of Successful Property Tax Issues
Percentage of Continuous Issues (beta = −8.9)
Percentage of Special Elections (beta = −11.2)

* = Further research is needed to support the chain of logic among these variables and the Percent of Successful Property Tax Issues.

operational purposes without asking for voter approval. Such a policy might serve to strengthen the financial support of rural schools.

(2) A great deal of variance accounted for in the percentage of successful property tax issues was by the percentage of ADC students (a negative relationship). Districts with higher percentages of students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds have much less chance of passing school financial issues. Typically, these are the very districts with the greatest need of passing property tax issues. An examination of the state foundation funding program needs to be conducted to insure that districts of lower financial ability are properly compensated by the state funding system.

Rural School Administrators

(1) Ohio rural school district administrators should carefully consider the nature of voter behavior prior to placing issues on the ballot in special elections or advocating continuous issues. It appears that property tax issues conducted during primary and general elections, where there is typically a greater turnout of voters are most likely to be supported. Short-term emergency issues are most likely to be supported by rural community members.

(2) Administrators in rural Ohio school districts should improve career guidance services available to students and parents in

an effort to limit the discrepancy between advanced educational expectations and actual student entry into post-secondary educational programs.

(3) Rural school administrators should proactively advocate greater state and federal involvement in improving the finance system of capital facilities. Local community members seem to be unwilling to support capital facilities.

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